

**TOWN OF ROCKY HILL
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MEETING OF JUNE 9, 2015**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Marti Stiglich called the June 9, 2015 Economic Development Commission meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Rocky Hill Town Hall, 761 Old Main Street, Rocky Hill, CT.

Those in attendance: Vice Chairman Mark Walworth, Commissioner Christopher Duff (Entered at 6:07 p.m.), Commissioner Sharon D. Mounds and Commissioner Timothy Tuller. Also present: Ray Carpentino (Economic Development Director) and Gina Luari (Executive Director of the Rocky Hill Chamber of Commerce).

Those absent: Commissioner John Roderick.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The Roll Call was taken at this point.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice Chairman Walworth made a motion to approve the Minutes of the May 12, 2015 meeting of the Economic Development Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tuller and adopted unanimously by those present.

3. ROCKY HILL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE UPDATE/BUSINESS INTRODUCTION

Chairwoman Stiglich asked Gina Luari from the Rocky Hill Chamber of Commerce (RHCC) to introduce herself and to give this Commission an update. Gina Luari said she is the Executive Director of the RHCC and they are currently working on obtaining new members. She and Ray Carpentino are trying to run a Business Forum, which will be a breakfast seminar on finances, at the end of July probably and they are working with everyone who had done this two years ago. They are trying to contact the same lenders, etc. and all of the RHCC members will be invited, as well as any businesses that would like to attend. The RHCC is trying to add more content to its member benefits as opposed to more events which are networking ones.

Gina Luari mentioned how Ray Carpentino had been at the Business Expo last week and how great he had been in the RHCC's booth because he was able to meet with a lot of Rocky Hill

businesses or businesses that were inquiring about coming into Town that didn't know about the RHCC. A lot more people were interested in the RHCC compared to the other Chambers of Commerce. She is hoping to continue building on the content that the RHCC is striving for.

Chairwoman Stiglich told Gina Luari that this Commission has a spot for her at each of their meetings and she is welcome to come always and bring any of the RHCC members with her. Gina Luari is planning on attending every meeting. The General Manager from Regus was supposed to be present this evening but she wasn't able to make it and hopefully she will be able to come to this Commission's next meeting. The RHCC is trying to get its members to use Regus' services.

Ray Carpentino said this was the first year that the RHCC had a presence at the Business Expo, which is an annual event at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford. It was a definite plus for the RHCC to have a presence there. Gina Luari said *The Hartford Business Journal* offered discounts to Chamber members so Solar City used that to get a booth at the Business Expo and they got a huge amount of leads.

Chairwoman Stiglich wished Gina Luari much success in her new endeavor and said this Commission is looking forward to seeing her.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

5. DISCUSSION/ACTION: NEXT BUSINESS FORUM

Ray Carpentino said Gina Luari had just mentioned this. Ray Carpentino said there had been a Business Forum two years ago and six financing entities (the DECD (Department of Economic and Community Development), MetroHartford Alliance and four non-profit entities) had been invited in to do presentations on small business loans and financing. Chairwoman Stiglich said there were a couple of State lending institutions also. Ray Carpentino said they are hoping to do this same thing sometime between now and September. Commissioner Mounds asked what month the last one had been held because July is a vacation month. Ray Carpentino said the last one might have been held in September. He has to coordinate this between each entity.

Chairwoman Stiglich asked Ray Carpentino to let this Commission know once he has a date. Gina Luari said the RHCC doesn't have anything going on in July so that is why she suggested that month. Chairwoman Stiglich said they will leave this up to the RHCC and a lot will depend on who they can get to participate for the keynote speakers.

Commissioner Duff asked who the sponsor of the Business Forum will be. Ray Carpentino said it will be the RHCC and the Economic Development Commission. Commissioner Duff's concern is how that date will be communicated if they don't have a date now unless it is will be after this Commission's July meeting. Ray Carpentino is pretty sure at this point that this Business Forum won't be held in July.

6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

(Please see the First Attachment.)

a. Ames redevelopment status

Ray Carpentino said there is no change.

b. Business Visitation Program

Ray Carpentino said he and Chairwoman Stiglich had met with the Manager (Ken Yavis) of the New York Pickle Deli last Friday. Ray Carpentino said that business is very successful and the plaza there, which is full of food establishments, is also. Chairwoman Stiglich said Ken Yavis owns that whole strip mall, as well as additional properties. Chairwoman Stiglich said they asked Ken Yavis the traditional questions they ask on these visitations with regards to if the Town can do anything for him or if there is anything that he doesn't like that the Town is doing. It was gratifying to hear that there are no issues. Ken Yavis has been in Rocky Hill for twenty-eight years and he likes it. Chairwoman Stiglich said the New York Pickle Deli is a great place to go have lunch or dinner, etc. She said they have the most unique and good hamburgers, as well as the best pastrami and corned beef in Town.

Ray Carpentino said they had a lengthy discussion with Ken Yavis about some potential traffic increase due to some additional development that is occurring on Cromwell Avenue. Ken Yavis is concerned that at some point there will be traffic jams and people won't be able to get through so they won't come to his restaurant. Ray Carpentino said there is really not much that they can do except for the Planning and Zoning Commission to implement some of the Rte. 3 corridor study recommendations as the developments come in. Commissioner Mounds said it will be pretty tight from Brook Street to the New York Pickle Deli. She asked how many traffic lights they are going to have there and she said there may be seven. Ray Carpentino said there will be one new one at Town Center West. Commissioner Mounds said she was counting that one too. Chairwoman Stiglich said that more traffic also means that possibly more people will stop in at the New York Pickle Deli. Commissioner Mounds said people might avoid it too because of traffic jams. Chairwoman Stiglich said there is a significant amount of traffic on the Rte. 3 corridor from Wethersfield into Cromwell, especially in the mornings and afternoons. Ray Carpentino said Ken Yavis draws most of his daytime customers from the Corporate Business Parks and he also draws people from out of the region. Chairwoman Stiglich was unaware that the New York Pickle Deli has a catering business. She and Ray Carpentino were able to give Ken Yavis one good lead for that. Commissioner Duff said he used to previously work on Capital Boulevard and he thought the New York Pickle Deli was more of a place for lunch or dinner but they actually do a lot of catering business (i.e. for business meetings, etc.). Chairwoman Stiglich said Ken Yavis delivers afternoon snacks every day to a preferred Rocky Hill customer. Commissioner Mounds said West Side Market and Patty Cakes do the same thing. Ray Carpentino said that Ken Yavis also had a question about signage with regards to doing something with portable signage for daily specials or making the signage (on the building) a little larger. Ray Carpentino said Ken Yavis also was concerned about minimum wage. Chairwoman Stiglich said Ken Yavis has a concern about hiring youngsters but she thinks this is a concern of "small businesses". Chairwoman Stiglich said there are twenty full time people who work there and six part time people.

Commissioner Mounds asked what is done with concerns when they get them from a business visitation. She asked if they get back to the business in writing or if they just address these when they are there. Ray Carpentino referred to Ken Yavis' concern about signage and said he conveyed this to Kim Ricci (Town Planner). Ray Carpentino said if this Commission feels there is an issue that is coming to the top and needs addressing then they can do a proposal for the Planning and Zoning Commission to look at. Chairwoman Stiglich said their policy is to discuss issues with the people when they are at the business visitations to tell them what the Town can or can't do. Ray Carpentino said from business visitations that he has done in the past, if there is an issue that he can address then he will do that via e-mail or he will send the business information.

Vice Chairman Walworth asked if Ken Yavis was told about temporary sign permits and Ray Carpentino said no but he is pretty sure that he is aware of that. Commissioner Duff said they have had signage concerns in the past and he asked if Ken Yavis' concerns overlapped with those or he asked if this is a new aspect. Chairwoman Stiglich said Ken Yavis understood and knew about portable signage but there were other issues because if this is put near the State road there then there will be an issue if the State doesn't approve this. Chairwoman Stiglich said Ken Yavis was talking about signage being bigger above the New York Pickle Deli and all of the shops there. Commissioner Duff said it seems that the other signage related issues are more about sites that are off of the road so that the signs are more visible from the road. He said this is kind of encapsulated with other things they have discussed and Chairwoman Stiglich said yes.

c. Plan of Conservation & Development – Status update/Proposal Discussion

Commissioner Duff said he had been at that meeting where the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD) was approved and it sounds like the next step will be to discuss the actual Zoning Regulation changes. A public workshop might be held after the summer to discuss some of the zoning changes that have come up and he assumes this will include what the Economic Development Commission has recommended. This is probably the schedule they will be looking at and he asked Ray Carpentino if this is accurate. Ray Carpentino said the Zoning Regulations' schedule is accurate but he thinks they will end up losing business if they wait three, four or five months to initiate what they want to for light manufacturing. This Commission's memo that was drafted was referred to Kim Ricci and she referred this to the Planning and Zoning Commission, which he thinks they had briefly discussed at their meeting prior to yesterday's one. The Planning and Zoning Commission had indicated that this would be an item on subsequent agendas. He told the Economic Development Commission that they could apply to the Planning and Zoning Commission for a text amendment with Chairwoman Stiglich signing the application. Ray Carpentino said that they could look at the existing uses in the Office Park Zone to maybe delete a few uses that shouldn't be there probably (i.e. general warehousing and trucking terminals) while adding light manufacturing. He told the Economic Development Commission if they want to continue this then they would have to let him know and he can start that process. Commissioner Duff said from last night's meeting that he wasn't sure about the timetable that the Economic Development Commission is on versus the timetable that the Planning and Zoning Commission is on and if they aligned. Ray Carpentino said they would more than likely have to initiate this themselves. Vice Chairman Walworth asked if this wouldn't require a motion and Ray Carpentino said it would eventually so they could do this tonight if they wanted to.

Chairwoman Stiglich said she had spoken at the special meeting of the Economic Development Subcommittee last Monday. This had been the agenda item and she spoke on behalf of the Rocky Hill businesses that they might potentially lose. That Subcommittee had told her that is a very good rationale but they would leave it to the Planning and Zoning Commission and they encouraged her to make sure that was done timely, as well as for her to be present at that meeting to give her same brief speech. She asked for a motion so that Ray Carpentino could proceed on this.

Vice Chairman Walworth made a motion to have the Economic Development Director fine tune the Office Park (OP) and Office Park II (OPII) Zoning Requirements with his ideas. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Duff.

Before this motion was voted on, Ray Carpentino said they weren't talking about changing the Zone but they were just talking about amending the text. He told them that it would be more appropriate for them to initiate a zoning text amendment to have light manufacturing allowed in the Office Park Zone.

Vice Chairman Walworth made a friendly amendment to rephrase the motion to direct the Economic Development Director to prepare and submit to the Planning & Zoning Commission, an application for a Zoning Regulation amendment to allow "light manufacturing" in the OP Zone as proposed by the Economic Development Commission. The friendly amendment was seconded by Commissioner Duff.

Before the motion with the friendly amendment was voted on, Commissioner Duff said there had been a lot of residents at last night's meeting who were concerned about truck traffic, etc. around the Brook Street area. He asked Ray Carpentino if he could describe light manufacturing for clarification and for the record and how that might be different from what they have in place currently. Ray Carpentino said they have a proposed definition of light manufacturing. The proposal modifies the definition section of the Zoning Regulations and adds the new use of light manufacturing under manufacturing. He read the definition of light manufacturing aloud. (Please see the Second Attachment.) He explained that the Office Park Zone (Corporate Ridge) allows transportation terminals and general warehousing. That generates a lot of truck traffic, as well as a lot of outdoor activities. Those buildings are usually not high value ones as a light manufacturer's building would be. For light manufacturing, everything would be manufactured in the interior and no sort of outdoor activity would be allowed. The impetus for this is the manufacturer in Rocky Hill that he has been trying to find a property for, for over one year, because that manufacturer is currently in a 17,000 square foot building and he needs to have a 40,000 square foot to 50,000 square foot building built. This manufacturer has been contacted by surrounding Towns.

The motion with the friendly amendment was voted on and adopted by those present with Commissioner Mounds abstaining.

Ray Carpentino said he will prepare the application package and he will send the Economic Development Commission copies of this. Chairwoman Stiglich asked Ray Carpentino to please be sure that each of the Economic Development Commission members get an official copy of the

POCD after it is printed up. Ray Carpentino said they will each be getting one. Commissioner Mounds asked when this is being planned for. Ray Carpentino said this will probably be between now and the effective date of June 26, 2015.

d. Town Center West Redevelopment Project Status Update

Ray Carpentino said there is nothing new from last month.

e. Silas Deane Streetscape

Ray Carpentino said there is no change on this and there is no word from the State as to whether or not the Town has received a grant. Commissioner Mounds asked if the Silas Deane Streetscape is the same as the Silas Deane Highway Improvement Program and Ray Carpentino said yes.

f. Business Assistance Efforts

Ray Carpentino went over the items that are listed with regards to this on his Director's Report. As of last week, he hadn't heard from the development management firm that has a client who is looking to build a 60,000 square foot building for medical offices so he will follow up on that.

Ray Carpentino said hopefully the prospective buyer of a property that is located on Cromwell Avenue will be submitting their application in July.

Ray Carpentino talked on the phone about one and a half weeks ago to the owner of the fairly large distribution facility in the region that is looking to relocate to Rocky Hill and he e-mailed them some possible property locations for them to look at. Chairwoman Stiglich asked if Rocky Hill has anything for them. Ray Carpentino said several properties are available in Corporate Ridge. Commissioner Mounds asked how many sites are left there. Ray Carpentino said there are six lots.

Ray Carpentino said he and Kim Ricci met with a realtor and business owner who is looking to build an approximate 15,000 square foot service building in Rocky Hill. Ray Carpentino said this will probably be more appropriate in a Business Park Zone but right now, there are no available vacant parcels in Rocky Hill.

Vice Chairman Walworth asked who the previous tenant was for 1823 Silas Deane Highway. Ray Carpentino said that has been vacant for the nine years he has been working for the Town of Rocky Hill. The owner of that has a new realtor who is a little more active so they are hopeful that she will have a client soon who is interested in that property. Commissioner Duff assumes that there would be a complete tearing down of that building and redevelopment of that site. Ray Carpentino said not necessarily and the main section of the front of it is probably okay to rehabilitate. Commissioner Mounds asked what had been there. Chairwoman Stiglich said there had been a printer there but that has been empty for at least fifteen to twenty years. Commissioner Duff asked if there is no historical significance to that structure. Chairwoman Stiglich said there is none.

g. Miscellaneous

Ray Carpentino said he attended a two day workshop at the Lyceum Center in Hartford on mixed-use financing. Commissioner Mounds asked who sponsored it. Ray Carpentino said the Housing Coalition did.

Ray Carpentino referred to the Statewide Economic Development Workshop that had been held by CCM (Connecticut Conference of Municipalities) and CERC (Connecticut Economic Resource Center) at Rocky Hill's Town Hall on May 20, 2015. There had been a very good turnout. Commissioner Mounds asked Ray Carpentino if he didn't invite the Economic Development Commission and he said that he did. Chairwoman Stiglich got the invitation and she said she went to that. People are very impressed about some of the things that Rocky Hill is doing. It is good for them to share ideas with other communities.

Vice Chairman Walworth asked about the River's Edge (Foundry) Development Project. Ray Carpentino said there is no change with regards to that or on the Solar City Project.

Commissioner Duff said they had a presentation a while ago by the Cora J. Belden Library and the business assistance services that are available. He asked if there is any sense of early returns on that project. Ray Carpentino said this is SBA and this has been very light. He had talked to Mary Hogan (Library Director) about this last month and maybe they can have an update on this at their next meeting. Commissioner Duff asked if they need to get the word out about these services. Ray Carpentino thinks that SBA needs to do that and he knows that information about this will be posted on the Town's updated website once they have that. He explained that there was the same issue in another Town that he had worked for. Commissioner Duff said this sounds like a great resource and hopefully Rocky Hill people will be able to take advantage of it. Chairwoman Stiglich asked if this was part of the SCORE presentation they saw and she asked if this was changed to SBA. Ray Carpentino said this is part of SBA. Chairwoman Stiglich asked Ray Carpentino to reach out to Mary Hogan to find out what is happening and see if there is anything that the Economic Development Commission can do. Chairwoman Stiglich said maybe SBA can be featured at the seminar that is being planned. Commissioner Mounds asked if SBA had presented at the Statewide Economic Development Workshop that had been held on May 20, 2015 and Chairwoman Stiglich said they didn't. Commissioner Mounds confirmed that SBA isn't getting out there in any kind of way. Chairwoman Stiglich said no. Gina Luari said she can put something about SCORE and SBA in RHCC's newsletter in July. Ray Carpentino said he would get a hold of Mary Hogan tomorrow so that she and Gina Luari could coordinate this. Ray Carpentino said they will invite SBA to do a presentation for their Business Forum.

7. CORRESPONDENCE/DISCUSSION

At this point, Chairwoman Stiglich thanked Ray Carpentino for finding the *Connecticut Economic Review (Supply and Demand)*. She assumed that they could get more of these from CERC and Eversource. Ray Carpentino said he has a bunch of these in his office. Commissioner Duff asked if this available online and Ray Carpentino said probably. Chairwoman Stiglich told the Commissioners that they had this in their packets and what caught

her eye is that Connecticut came in Number One out of all of the States as far as having the healthiest residents.

Ray Carpentino also had distributed a document entitled “Doing Business in Connecticut” to this Commission. Chairwoman Stiglich said she had also received a copy of that from a seminar she had attended and that has some very interesting things in it also.

Ray Carpentino passed out a flyer about “Purple Pancake Day” at the Town Line Diner all day long on June 13, 2015. Gina Luari said the Alzheimer’s Association had been at the Business Expo and she mentioned that the Atria, along with the RHCC and Town Line Diner, are holding this event. June is Alzheimer’s Awareness Month. She mentioned that people can make donations too if they don’t want to order the pancakes. The RHCC, which is trying to do a lot more fundraising with different organizations, is joining the Atria Team because they are the leaders of the Alzheimer’s Association in this area.

8. ADJOURN

Vice Chairman Walworth made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:47 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mounds and adopted unanimously by those present.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo-Anne Booth
Recording Secretary